

support the amendment to cut it to 2 percent. Thank you.

SENATOR CARSTEN: Senator Warner, on the Hefner amendment, please.

SENATOR WARNER: Mr. President, I, to would rise to oppose the amendment. I would tend to agree that if you do not want to begin to keep state employees' salaries somewhat in line with the competitive market, why you just as well make no change, but I would oppose that too. The 2 percent increase, while there is some reduction in the current year's budget, that would be true. It's not going to be the difference between changing the tax rate and not changing it, it just will not do it. Again, it would make more sense if you want to reduce the budget, then do it the route that in fact does have ongoing effect and the way things are shaping up you're talking about 35, \$40 million of program elimination between the 21 million drop that occurred in February and if you're talking 25 to 30 million now, I don't know what the Advisory Board is going to do. And if you want to maintain any kind of reserves at all, then this does not solve your problem and I'd urge you to reject the amendment.

SENATOR CARSTEN: Senator DeCamp, please, on the Hefner amendment.

SENATOR DECAMP: Mr. President, we're not going to solve all the budget problems with this amendment or any other amendment on one item, but unless we show some indication that we're willing to deal with the hard issues on some of the most visible and vulnerable places such as public employees' salaries which is a very big ticket item, unless we show some willingness to deal with that sacred cow, just as we have to deal with a lot of others, then we're never going to make any progress on this matter. It's going to be the old system, the old story of every special interest gets what they want and only the taxpayer ends up with a pretty major tax increase and a high base of the entire budget for next year. So for example, a number of amendments were offered last week as I recall for this addition of money for Curtis, or this addition of money for this other special program. Regularly a majority voted against doing these things. Regularly that majority consisted of some of the very people, most of the very people that are against doing any adjustment in employees' salaries. I think you have to look at the entire picture and the entire picture says it's not unreasonable to make some adjustments here. Senator Hefner has offered another approach, one that lowers the base both this